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LAFAYETTE VISTAS

Council To Hold Town Hall Meeting About The Lafayette Library

Have you ever been to the Lafayette Library? Does it meet your family's needs? Could the facility be improved, or is it fine as-is? What responsibility does the library have to provide internet and technology services?

These are just a few of the important issues that City Council and School Board members will discuss at a special "Town Hall" meeting on October 12th. We hope you'll join them at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. The meeting will be in the Manzanita Room and begin at 7pm.

Task Force To Present Report

Over the past several years, local library supporters have attempted to address two substantive library issues: (1) Are the services provided by the library (e.g., hours of operation, staffing levels, etc.) adequate to meet our needs? And, (2) Is the Lafayette library facility satisfactory, or can it be improved?

Regarding the first question, library services are provided by Contra Costa County, and there have been broad discussions about their sufficiency. Voters were asked in 1998 to approve a 1/8th percent sales tax measure to supplement the county's library operations; that measure would have increased the library's hours of operation from the current 29 hours per week to 54 hours per week. The vote required a 2/3rds majority for passage and, though it was supported by 68% of Lafayette voters, the measure failed on a county-wide basis, garnering 64.5% of the vote. At press time, the County's Board of Supervisors was actively discussing other alternatives to generate new funding for the system.

To address the second question – Is the Lafayette Library satisfactory? – the Lafayette City Council and School Board last year jointly appointed a "Lafayette Library Vision 2000 Task Force". The group was charged with developing a strategic plan for bringing the Lafayette Library into the next century, and has issued a written report (available at the City Offices and at www.ci.lafayette.ca.us). The Task Force will present its written report at the October 12th Town Hall meeting; following are their key facts and findings:

The Library Isn't Big Enough

The Lafayette Library circulates 250,000 books each year, and averages about 500 patrons per day. It is one of the smallest of the twenty-four branches in the County, but is the fourth most heavily used. When it opened in 1962, the Lafayette Library had 15,000 books and was planned for a maximum capacity of 20,000 books; the library currently contains about 65,000 items – more than 300% of capacity! The library opened with 200 reference books; it now holds more than 2,400. The Task Force thus notes that "...the Lafayette Library lacks space for its current collection and has no room for collection growth."

The Current Location is Fine

The Task Force suggests that residents like the general location of the library, on Moraga Road near Lafayette School. In a 1997 survey conducted for the City, more than 85% of those polled said that the current site was satisfactory; nearly half rated the site as "very convenient".

Plan To Accommodate Changing Technology

The Task Force was particularly interested in how technology is changing the way libraries operate. Today, information is stored in a wide variety of ways, including cassettes, CD-ROMs, internet terminals, CDs, MP3, and others.

These new formats require space not planned for in the current facility, as well as a complete wiring upgrade. Given the digitalization of almost all information sources, the Task Force notes that "a delicate balance needs to be developed, continually assessed, and maintained as to information formats for the library user." The report suggests that the library should aggressively accommodate technological change.

How Can Library Improvements Be Financed?

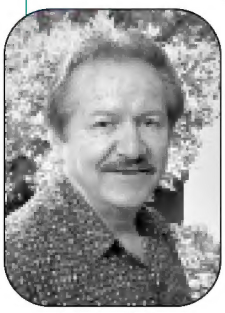
Contra Costa County currently owns and maintains the Lafayette Library. However, given its limited funding sources and the many social services that it is required to provide, the County does not have money to improve the Lafayette Library. The City Council, acting as the Redevelopment Agency, has thus agreed to purchase the facility from the County and upgrade it to meet the needs of local users. This transfer of ownership is not uncommon: of the twenty-four branch buildings in the system, only nine remain under County ownership.

These upgrades could be costly (the proposed new Orinda library, for instance, is estimated to cost about $10 million). Fortunately, however, community members have supported the Lafayette Library with overwhelming generosity. As has been previously reported in the Vistas, the nonprofit Friends of the Lafayette Library raises over $25,000 annually for the sole benefit of the library through its bi-monthly sale of used books. The money is used to pay for new materials, furniture, and operating expenses.

(continued on page 2)

City Increases Focus on Quality of Life Regulations

Lafayette residents have very high expectations regarding their fellow residents' compliance with "quality of life"-type regulations, as outlined in the City's Municipal Code. "Lafayette is one of the most attractive and desirable places to live in the Bay Area," explains Planning Services Manager Mike Henn. "Residents often move here for that reason, and they want to keep it that way."



New Code Enforcement Officer: Mel Peres

Consequently, Henn reports, the City has received an increasing number of complaints from residents and homeowner associations about disregard for a wide range of ordinances. To remedy the situation, the City has hired a half-time Code Enforcement Officer who has been on the job since late summer. "Mel Peres is someone who was already working for the City," says Henn. "He's taken on additional responsibilities that involve enforcing compliance with City ordinances."

Some of the most common complaints received have to do with infractions against ordinances that prohibit:

- parking RVs, boats, and oversized vehicles in front or side yards
- inappropriate signage that causes clutter and detracts from the attractiveness of the downtown business area
- business operations in residential areas
- excessive noise levels
- businesses operating without a City business registration

To provide an opportunity to become compliant, the Code Enforcement Officer will first issue a warning. In cases of continued non-compliance, he will issue a citation carrying a minimum $175 penalty. This fine can be doubled and tripled for continued non-compliance or multiple offenses, or be levied on a per-day basis.

If you're unsure about what the Municipal Code covers, or have specific questions, call the Planning Services Division at 284-1976. To register a complaint, please call Mel Peres at 284-1976.

The City has also established an Appeals Hearing Board, empowered to hear challenges to the citations issued by the Code Enforcement Officer. The Board, comprised of Lafayette residents Bud Lake, Clyde Long and Ned Robinson, with Don Anderson as an alternate, will meet monthly. At press time, location, day and time specifics had not yet been determined. Call or e-mail the City (see back page) for more information.

What 2 Do About Y2K

Will it really be a problem? Nobody knows. But one thing is sure – it won't hurt to be prepared.

The Y2K problem arises from the fact that computer programs recognize only the last two digits in a date's four-digit year. That can confuse computers and software that can't distinguish between 1900 and 2000, potentially causing system malfunctions. Some services that may be affected by potential computer disruptions are the delivery of utilities including electricity, water and gas; electronic financial transaction processes; distribution and transportation systems; and health care procedures. Since the situation is so uncertain, most experts recommend taking steps similar to those used to prepare for unpredictable situations such as earthquakes.

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) suggests that all households be prepared to be self-sufficient (able to live without running water, electricity and/or gas, telephone and assistance from safety devices) for three to seven days. The OES further suggests making accommodations in the areas of health/medical/dental, banking, communications, and transportation. You can access an excellent range of preparedness information through the American Red Cross homepage at www.redcross.org. In general, the Red Cross recommends that you:

- spend some time each month between now and December 1999 making preparations; and,
- recognize the value of working with your community, neighborhood, or religious organization regarding preparedness planning for Y2K as well as other emergencies.

The Lafayette Emergency Action Response Network (LEARN) has trained volunteers who can administer first aid, take part in search and rescue efforts, and perform other vital functions during an emergency. LEARN needs more volunteers. If you are interested in helping other Lafayette residents help themselves prepare for and cope with a wide range of emergencies, please call Cathy Surges at 299-3232 ext. 2205.

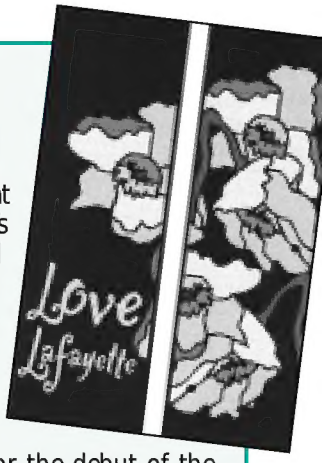
LIBRARY (continued from page 1)

Additionally, the Library recently received two major financial gifts. Kenneth Hufford, a long time Lafayette resident, bequeathed $189,000 to the Friends of the Lafayette Library, and an anonymous donor recently contributed $40,000 to the City to be used for a new library building. The Task Force suggests that a combination of sources be used to fund new facilities, including a public outreach effort to raise funds from individuals, foundations, and corporations.

Moving Forward

Lafayette has a rich library history. Services have been provided on a continuous basis since about 1860, and the current library was dedicated almost forty years ago. We hope you'll become part of this history and help us plan a library that will serve Lafayette well into the 21st century. We hope to see you at the Town Hall meeting on October 12th at 7pm.

BANNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE FORMED



The holiday and special events flags that flutter along Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette's downtown business district have received enthusiastic approval from residents and visitors alike. So much so, in fact, that a new Banner Advisory Committee, made up of the Design Review Chair, the City Manager, and a local graphic artist has been formed to schedule and produce a year-round program for the City. Watch for the debut of the new "Love Lafayette" banner in November.

TIDBITS.....

New Hotline for Non-Emergency Repairs

The City's Public Works Services Division has launched a new hotline where residents can leave non-emergency repair requests 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Whether you want to report a pothole, curb, gutter, or catch basin problem, simply call 299-3259. The public works staff will review all calls and take care of the problem as quickly as possible.

State-of-the-Art Traffic Signals

As of June, all of Lafayette's red traffic signals were upgraded to take advantage of LED (light emitting diode) technology. While the change won't be noticeable to most people, the energy and cost savings are obvious and impressive. The new hi-tech lights use 80% less energy, netting $16,000 in annual savings to the City. The upgrade also made the City eligible for a one-time $17,000 rebate from PG&E. The technology for converting green lights to LED is still in development, and yellow caution lights don't use enough electricity to warrant the new technology.

Time for Creek Maintenance

After one of the strangest summer weather seasons on record, it's time to get ready for what is usually our rainy season. Key things to watch for are fallen leaves and vegetation in or near streams or drains and tree limbs or other materials that might obstruct water flow. Remember, streams running by and on private property are the responsibility of individual property owners. It takes all of us working together to eliminate potential flooding hazards. If you have questions about winterizing your creek, call the City's Engineering Technician, Rick Grimes, at 299-3241.

To become involved with the newly formed Friends of Lafayette's Creeks advocacy and volunteer group, please call Clint Harnish at 284-2441 or Carl Piercy at 284-4251.

New Public Works Facility

The Public Works Services Division has relocated from its downtown location to a new building at 3001 Camino Diablo Blvd., near the El Curtola Blvd./Hwy. 24 overpass. The new facility, which was designed to reflect the semi-rural character of the east side of the City, resembles a small equestrian stable complete with a dark green roof, wood textured siding, and a weather-vane. Drive by and take a look!

Cable TV Increases Channels

The service provided by AT&T Cable Services (formerly TCI) was recently upgraded to provide 79 video channels. To determine whether your home has the new fiber-optic cable technology, simply check to see that channel 11 displays the cable TV schedule. If it doesn't, please contact Rebecca Lee, the City's Director of Administrative Services, at 284-1968.

For information about cable programming, scheduling, or to report complaints, please contact AT&T directly: Marian Jackson, Director of Government Affairs, at 372-4303, or Debbie White, Customer Relations Manager, at 372-4334.

AROUND TOWN

Oct 18 **GOLD COAST CHAMBER PLAYERS** – 1st in a series of three. 8pm, Town Hall Theatre. Tickets 283-1557; Info: 283-3728.

Oct 30 **CARBO LOAD PASTA FEED** – Lafayette Elementary, 5-9 pm. Silent auction, raffle, children's games, face painting, clowns; Halloween contest! Sponsored by Lafayette Rotary. Get your "run" T-shirt at that time. Call 284-7404.

Oct 31 **LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR RUN –** 7am: registration; 8am: 10k, 5k or 2 mile run/walk men's & women's. Elementary kids: $15, intermediate/high school/adult: $20. Downtown Lafayette. Benefits local schools and Chamber of Commerce. T-shirts, awards, snacks & beverages. Entertainment: Stanley School Orchestra. Register at Chamber of Commerce, Lafayette Health Club or Oakwood Athletic Club. Call 284-7404.

Oct 31 **PANCAKE BREAKFAST –** by Acalanes Football Team. Minimal charge. Call 284-7404.

Oct 30 Nov 6 **KIDS IN CREEKS –** "Fall '99 Educator Workshop for grades K-12". Will assist teacher to engage students in hands-on science, teach about creeks & watersheds, awareness of natural world, sources & impacts of water pollution, effects our lifestyle has on the environment. Partially funded by City of Lafayette. Aquatic Outreach Institute, 510-231-5784; www.aoinstitute.org.

Nov 2 **ELECTION DAY – Don't Forget To Vote!!** City Council: 3 seats; Lafayette School Board: 2 seats; Parcel Tax for Lafayette School District.

Nov 4 **CITIZEN OF THE YEAR DINNER –** 6:15 pm; Lafayette Park Hotel, co-sponsored by CC Sun & Chamber of Commerce. 284-7404.

Nov 19 **COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING BREAKFAST –** 7:30 am. Join together in an ecumenical setting to celebrate our special community. Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Call 284-7404.

Dec 3 **HOSPICE TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY –** 6-7pm, Lafayette Circle east at Mt. Diablo Blvd. Call 609-1830 or 284-7404.

Dec 3-12 **ARTZ 4 KIDZ –** Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Call 283-1557.

Jan 14 **BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR DINNER –** 6:30pm, Lafayette Park Hotel. Call 284-7404.

TOWN HALL THEATRE: Upcoming Shows

Box Office: 283-1557 Open Tues-Sat: 1-6 pm.

9/16 – 10/10: Laughter on the 23rd Floor

10/28 – 11/21: The Town Criers Sing Gershwin

1/20 – 2/13: Gigi

CITY PARKS & RECREATION – 284-2232

Teen Activities: 284-5815 (6-12 grade) (Chaperones needed)

ACE OF CLUBS: 10/1: Rising Loafer Cafe, 8pm
10/15: Lafayette Community Center., 8pm

FLIPSIDE DANCE CLUB: 10/23 & 11/20, 9-midnight, $5, no reservations needed, Laf. Com. Ctr.; High School ID required.

"Lamorinda" Cities Join Forces to Protect High Quality of Life in Region

Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda have been working together since January to develop near-, mid-, and long-term goals aimed at maintaining and improving the quality of life in our tri-city region, also known as "Lamorinda." The three City Councils have been meeting quarterly to discuss collective challenges and issues of mutual concern.

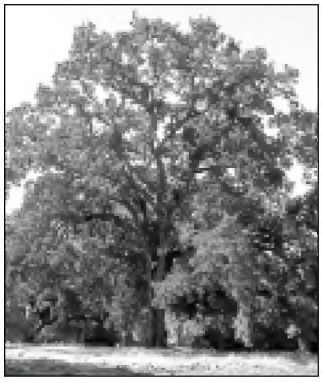
Given our region's prosperity, good schools, and high quality of life, it's inevitable that more people will want to live and work here, putting pressure on our land, traffic patterns, environment, and lifestyle. The Lamorinda Councils are committed to forging a comprehensive and coordinated approach for dealing with the impact that continued growth will have on Lamorinda.

Progress Report

During last January's initial brainstorming session, council members indicated what they believed were the key causes of growth-related problems in the Lamorinda region. Since then, they have worked diligently to come up with potential actions our communities can take to address growth-related concerns, including:

Land Use/Schools

- Link future development approvals to available roadway capacity
- Provide affordable school bus service, and work to increase school bus ridership, to all Lamorinda Schools
- Establish a Lamorinda Regional Planning Review Board to consider the impacts of larger land developments
- Reduce future housing densities in residential/open space zones through the development of stricter General Plan regulations
- Require that larger residential developments provide regular or on-call shuttle service to BART
- Establish a common Lamorinda Ridgeline Ordinance to control new construction on or near sensitive ridgelines



Open Space

- Establish a Lamorinda Open Space Trust or District to purchase and maintain undeveloped land
- Explore the feasibility of putting a tax measure on the ballot to purchase additional open space
- Establish a uniform Lamorinda Open Space Development Fee

Infrastructure

- Complete the traffic improvement projects detailed in the Lamorinda Transportation Improvement Plan as well as the projects funded by the Lamorinda Fee and Financing Authority
- Build an integrated network of safe bike lanes and walking trails throughout the region

What Do You Think?

Do you see additional or different areas of concern? Have ideas about solutions? If so, the quarterly Tri-Council meetings are rotated among the three Lamorinda cities and are open to the public. For more information, please call Sue Jusaitis, Lafayette City Clerk, at 299-3212.

CITY DIRECTORY

Leave your Council Members a message!
Call 284-1968

Council Members		EXT.
Erling Horn	**Mayor**	271
Jay Strauss	**Vice Mayor**	270
Ivor Samson	**Council Member**	272
Don Tatzin	**Council Member**	274
Anne Grodin	**Council Member**	273

New City Council Members will be seated 11/22/99

For messages to **all** Council Members: **907**

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Rebecca Lee, Director Admin. Srvcs.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Sue Jusaitis, City Clerk	**299-3212**

Community Development

• **Engineering Services**	**284-1951**
Tony Coe, Manager	**299-3203**
• **Planning Services**	**284-1976**
Mike Henn, Manager	**Fax: 284-1122**
• **Public Works Services**	
Ron Lefler, Manager	**299-3214**
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	**299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Shanks, Analyst	**299-3216**
	Or 299-3215

Parks and Recreation — 284-2232

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Yvonne Ozorio, Senior Services	**284-5050**
Teen Programs	**284-5815**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Hours: **M-F: 8:00 - 12:00 & 1:00 - 5:00**

Addresses

	Fax: 284-3169
Street Address:	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210**
Mailing Address:	**P.O. Box 1968**
	Lafayette, CA 94549-1968
E-mail:	**lafay1968@aol.com**
Homepage URL:	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

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City of Lafayette
P.O. Box 1968
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